under the revenue component, which is not counted as part of investment measured in terms of statistics of gross capital formation-compiled by Central Statistical Organization. The decline in gross capital formation referred to above is essentially investment in irrigation.

As per the Ninth and Tenth Plan Documents of the Planning Commission, the plan outlay for the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE) was Rs. 3377 crores during the Ninth Plan and Rs. 5368 crore during the Tenth Plan. Keeping in view the importance of agricultural research, the plan outlay has been raised by 15% from Rs. 1000 crore in 2004-05 to Rs. 1150 crore in the year 2005-06.

(c) Keeping in view the importance of Agriculture in the economy, the Union Budget 2005-06 has provided substantial outlays in areas like horticulture and irrigation including micro irrigation. The Budget has provided Rs. 630 crore in 2005-06 for National Horticulture Mission, which will ensure end-to-end approach having backward and forward linkages covering research, production, post harvest management, processing and marketing, under one umbrella, in an integrated manner. The Budget has provided Rs. 4800 crore for Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme for 2005-06 compared with Rs. 2800 crore in 2004-05. With a view to improving water use efficiency in Indian agriculture, the Budget has provided Rs. 400 crore for promoting micro irrigation in 2005-06. since the flow of credit is important in accelerating the pace of investment in agriculture, the disbursement of agricultural credit is proposed to be stepped up by 30% per cent from commercial banks, regional rural banks and cooperative banks to the agriculture sector in 2005-06. The measures are expected to lead to a reversal of the deceleration in agricultural growth.

Policy for doubling agricultural production

1271. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a declining trend in the growth rate of agriculture and the performance of agriculture has been disturbing;

(b) whether in such a situation, there is a policy initiated to double our agricultural production in ten years; and

(c) if so, the thrust and focus to achieve this policy initiative in terms of investment in the entire chain of agricultural activities, infrastructural development, expansion and upgradation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) The growth rate in agriculture including allied sectors of forestry, logging and fishing computed in real terms (at 1993-94 prices) has shown a declining trend during the Ninth Plan and the first three years of the Tenth Plan (2002-05) as given below:

Plan Period	Average Annual Growth in Agriculture and allied Sectors
Eighth Plan (1992-97)	4.7
Ninth Plan(1997-2002)	2.1
Tenth Plan (first three years 2002-05)	1.2

(b) and (c) In order to address the problems faced by the agriculture sector/farmers, the Govt. in its National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP) has identified a number of thrust areas for focused and priority attention and for close monitoring, which *inter-alia* includes Dry Land Farming, Credit and Cooperatives, Crop Insurance, Horticulture, rural Infrastructure-Micro Irrigation, Cold Chain, and Market Outlets. The focus is on doubling horticulture production by 2011-12. The Mid-Term Appraisal of the Tenth Plan has also underscored the fact that agricultural diversification has to be a major element in the strategy for accelerating agricultural growth which calls for action on several fronts:—

- Diversification to be area/region oriented, implying focus on agro-climatic region
- Shift of land from cereals to non-cereals (increasing both farm income and employment) coupled with increased productivity in cereals to ensure adequate per capita availability
- Shift to horticultural crops to be supported by marketing arrangements including private sector involvement in marketing, encouragement of downstream food processing and research linked to market requirements.

Keeping in view the importance of Agriculture in the economy, the Union Budget 2005-06 has provided substantia outlays in the areas like horticulture and irrigation including micro irrigation. The budget has provided Rs. 630 crore in 2005-06 for National Horticulture Mission, which will ensure end-to-end approach having backward and forward linkages covering research, production, post harvest management, processing and marketing, under one umbrella, in an integrated manner. The budget has provided Rs. 4800 crore for Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme for 2005-06 compared with Rs. 2800 crore in 2004-05. With a view to improving water use in Indian agriculture, the Budget has provided Rs. 400 crore for promoting micro irrigation in 2005-06. Since the flow of credit is important in accelerating the pace of investment in agriculture, the disbursement of agricultural credit is proposed to be stepped up by 30% per cent from commercial banks, regional rural banks and cooperative banks to the agriculture sector in 2005-06. The measures are expected to lead to a reversal of the deceleration in agricultural growth. Simultaneously, since agriculture is a state subject, states will have to increase their budgetary outlays on agriculture.

National Farmers Welfare Fund

1272. PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the farmers have to face quite often and calamities like floods, droughts, land slides, etc. and suffer losses running into billions; and

(b) whether Government would consider to institute National Farmers Welfare Fund to ensure that the difficulties faced by the farmers are warded off?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) The following are the major initiatives to provide relief to calamity affected farmers:

(i) A mechanism exists in the form of the Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) and the National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) to provide immediate relief to the victims of natural calamities including the farmers.